



**U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT  
BUREAU FOR DEMOCRACY, CONFLICT, AND HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE  
(DCHA)  
OFFICE OF U.S. FOREIGN DISASTER ASSISTANCE (OFDA)**

**SOUTHERN AFRICA – Complex Food Security Crisis**

Situation Report #5, Fiscal Year (FY) 2003

December 6, 2002

*Note: the last situation report was dated November 15, 2002.*

**BACKGROUND**

A number of Southern African countries are currently experiencing food security crises, due to a combination of adverse climate conditions for two consecutive growing seasons, mismanagement of grain reserves, and restrictive government policies that severely inhibit private sector commerce. During the past production season, unusually dry conditions extended across much of the region, from southern Zambia eastward to southern Mozambique, resulting in crop failures and limited production in many areas. Normally, food stocks carried over from the previous year and the intra-regional trade of surplus commodities help to offset production shortfalls. This year, however, regional stocks are exceptionally low, as they were drawn down to fill the previous year's food shortages, and surplus commodities within the region are limited. Zimbabwe is facing a serious humanitarian crisis, with nearly half the population at risk. Humanitarian food crises also exist in Malawi and Zambia. Poor and vulnerable households in Swaziland and Lesotho and some parts of Mozambique also require food assistance. The governments of several countries have declared national disasters due to actual and anticipated food shortages, including Malawi (February 27), Lesotho (April 22), Zimbabwe (April 30), and Zambia (May 28). In July, the United Nations (U.N.) issued a regional Consolidated Interagency Appeal (CAP) to meet the food and non-food emergency humanitarian needs in Southern Africa. The U.N. appealed for \$611 million from donors, including \$507 million for food aid through the U.N. World Food Program's (WFP) Emergency Operation (EMOP). Since the beginning of 2002, in response to the food security crisis, the U.S. Government (USG) has provided or pledged more than \$276 million in humanitarian assistance through the U.S. Agency for International Development's (USAID) Office of Food for Peace (USAID/FFP) and the Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (USAID/OFDA), and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). The majority of the USG humanitarian assistance has been emergency food relief provided by USAID/FFP.

**NUMBERS AT A GLANCE – POPULATIONS IN NEED: SEPTEMBER 1, 2002 TO MARCH 31, 2003**

<i>Country</i>	<i>Maximum Number of Population in Need<sup>1</sup></i>	<i>Maximum Percentage of Total (Country/Region) Population in Need<sup>1</sup></i>
Zimbabwe	6,700,000	49%
Malawi	3,300,000	29%
Zambia	2,900,000	26%
Lesotho	650,000	30%
Mozambique	590,000	3%
Swaziland	270,000	24%
<b>Total</b>	<b>14,400,000</b>	<b>25%</b>

<sup>1</sup>Anticipated populations and food aid needs are based on SADC FANR assessments released on September 16, 2002. (Numbers are rounded.)

**Total USG Humanitarian Assistance provided, to date.....\$276,029,550**  
**Total USG Food Aid provided, to date, in Metric Tons (MT)..... 499,493**

**CURRENT SITUATION**

***Latest Shipment of U.S. Food Aid to the Region.***

To date, the USG has delivered over 350,000 MT of food assistance to the region. The balance of approximately 149,000 MT will arrive in the region by the end of February.

***Update on the WFP Emergency Operation (EMOP).***

WFP has sourced approximately 64 percent of its EMOP, with approximately 33 percent of the resources coming from the USG. USG aid represents approximately 50 percent of the total humanitarian requirements for 2002.

**Status of Biotech-Derived Food Aid.** The Government of the Republic of Zambia (GRZ) has maintained its policy of not accepting biotech-derived food assistance, even if milled. Mozambique and Malawi have expressed concerns over the environmental effects of biotech food, but are accepting such food aid as long as it is milled before distribution. However, the Government of Malawi (GOM) has publicly stated its intention not to disrupt the distribution of humanitarian corn if milling is not possible. Swaziland and Lesotho have continued to accept all relief food aid of biotech origin, but Lesotho requires milling.

The Government of Zimbabwe (GOZ) has agreed to accept U.S.-donated corn under the condition that all whole kernel grain be milled prior to entering the country to prevent it from being planted. Consequently, WFP will more than likely mill the USG corn for Zimbabwe in South Africa, which will cause significant delays in the delivery of food aid.

**SADC FANR National Vulnerability Assessments.** The Southern Africa Development Community's Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Development Unit (SADC FANR) Vulnerability Assessment Committees are currently conducting the second round of rolling assessments in each of the six countries covered by WFP's EMOP. The teams will conclude their assessments later this month, which will provide an indication of the latest number of beneficiaries in need.

## COUNTRY UPDATES

**Zimbabwe.** Zimbabwe's Minister of Lands, Agriculture and Rural Resettlement, Joseph Made, made a surprising announcement on December 1, when he acknowledged that the GOZ had failed to ensure food security for the country. Minister Made said Zimbabwe faces a deficit of 13,000 MT of corn each week since it is unable to import the required 35,000 MT.

Minister Made's announcement came after WFP's Country Director for Zimbabwe stated that the crisis was approaching its worst period as WFP lacks sufficient food aid. WFP did not have the resources to meet its target of three million beneficiaries in 35 districts for November. However, WFP still aims to distribute food to 5.8 million Zimbabweans in 57 districts by January. The GOZ's import requirements on biotech corn and its delays in approving additional implementing partners have significantly hindered distribution efforts. As of November 25, WFP had distributed almost 14,000 MT of food commodities to 1.1 million Zimbabweans.

The GOZ's approval of two additional non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to act as WFP implementing partners should help to improve food distribution. The three NGOs that were approved by the GOZ in mid-October are expected to be operational by late December.

The GOZ has also authorized Save the Children (UK) to resume its food distributions in Binga District.

WFP food monitors in Zimbabwe report worsening conditions in various locations, in particular in Mashonaland West, Central Provinces, and Masvingo. In Masvingo, there are reports that rural families have started migrating to the city in search of food and employment. Throughout the country there are limited supplies of corn-sorghum-bulgur, pulses, and oil, as well as inconsistent access to fuel. During mid-November, food distributions began for the first time in Nkayi, Matabeleland North, where food security has been deteriorating as commercial and government cereal stocks decline.

A USAID/FFP assessment to Matabeleland in early November showed that the food security situation in Binga and most of Matabeleland North is also severe. The households have no remaining food stocks from the harvest and for several months have been relying on food purchases, food aid and/or consumption of wild foods. There was anecdotal evidence that malnutrition levels have risen, but this could not be confirmed due to the absence of a systematic collection of data. The assessment found that political manipulation of food aid appears to be isolated to the situations in Insiza and Binga. Nevertheless, the GOZ has been able to manipulate and interfere with food aid in subtler ways through delays in approval of commodities, restrictions on food aid imports, and control over NGO registrations and activities.

Local press reports indicate that two people have died of cholera in Tongwe in Matabeleland South. This is the most recent outbreak since the one in nearby Masvingo province in August.

The latest food security update on Zimbabwe from the Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET) stated that only Chiredzi, Chimanimani, Mberengwa, Insiza, Karbia, and Umzingwane Districts have more than 75 percent of those identified as food insecure receiving assistance. The outlook looks bleak since at the current rate of imports of 99,500 MT of corn per month, an additional 650,000 MT of corn could be imported before March 2003, but this would only meet 73 percent of the monthly corn requirements. The food security situation has also been exacerbated by the price controls enacted by the GOZ, which have raised the prices of basic commodities well above the rate of inflation.

**Malawi.** WFP's Country Director in Malawi announced that the number of people in need is expected to rise from 2.3 million to 3.3 million during December. The last assessment conducted by the SADC FANR reported that the maximum number of people in need in Malawi would be 3.3 million through March 31, 2003. SADC FANR will release its latest assessment report on Malawi later this month. Fortunately WFP's emergency operation in

Malawi has improved because of the addition of four locomotives at the Nacala port in Mozambique, increasing the amount of food relief that can be transported to the landlocked country. Four more locomotives are expected to be added by the end of January, which will allow WFP to transport 33,000 MT monthly.

During the week of November 29, WFP received over 5,700 MT of mixed commodities for immediate general food distributions and the HIV/AIDS Assistance to Malnourished Groups program. According to WFP, rural farmers are planting crops, and the southern and central regions of the country have received initial rains. However, the prolonged, soaking rains that signal the start of planting season have not begun in the central and northern regions.

According to FEWS NET, farm inputs are readily available in Malawi, except in the districts of Mulanje, Nsanje, Chikwawa, Dedza, and Nkhataba. However, even with stable seeds and fertilizer prices, access to them has been limited by a lack of purchasing power. In its latest report, FEWS NET also indicated that imports are urgently needed to cover the national food gap, which stood at 506,800 MT on October 31. Local market corn prices are on the rise due to increased shortages, but prices generally have remained lower than last year.

Donors have begun preparing for Malawi's cholera season, which traditionally occurs between November and April, by providing the GOM with needed medical supplies and logistical support in the most vulnerable districts. USAID/OFDA has provided nearly \$826,000 to the World Health Organization for cholera response and prevention and more than \$1 million to UNICEF for emergency nutrition programs to mitigate the impact of the impending outbreak. The number of new cases has dropped significantly since April 2002, but some districts reported cholera cases in October.

**Zambia.** WFP reported that food distribution was slower during the week of November 29 due to a decreased supply of commodities for its implementing partners. Heavy rains also caused delays in food distribution in Chipata, an area where WFP monitors have reported a dramatic decline in the food situation. However, WFP expects the pipeline will improve with the imminent arrival of 22,000 MT of corn. A scheduled shipment of white corn from Tanzania should further increase food supplies to meet 77 percent of needs in December. The GRZ has also released funds to the Food Reserve Agency to buy approximately 29,000 MT of corn in country. In addition, refugee camps in Zambia have already received a portion of 11,126 MT of white corn from South Africa.

According to WFP, its implementing partners are under local pressure to distribute its limited resources to more beneficiaries than planned. In response, food monitors have initiated discussions with community-based satellite

committees to refine targeting and registration to reach the most vulnerable people. WFP is also looking for alternative sources of grain and using cash given by donors.

FEWS NET's latest report on Zambia indicated that the rainy season has begun, bringing most of the rain to the north but much less to the southern half of the country. In rural areas in the south, there are continuing reports of food problems since little food aid was distributed in November. The urban markets generally have a supply of staple food, but most large millers expect that after the end of December they will need to rely on imported corn. FEWS NET also reported that corn and meal prices in both urban and rural areas have continued to increase.

A recent USAID/OFDA assessment confirmed that seed distributions by donor-supported NGOs in rural areas is underway, and seed availability is widespread. However, the GRZ and GRZ-supported NGOs are lagging in their seed distribution efforts. The team reported that it was too early to assess crop progress and the potential harvest since not all seeds and inputs had been delivered. However, the team concluded household food security will likely continue to decline over the next several months.

An earlier USAID/OFDA assessment in mid-October found that overall the nutritional status of the affected areas in Zambia is poor but within acceptable ranges for an emergency food crisis. However, surveys conducted in September did show a slight increase in global acute and severe acute malnutrition over the baseline nutrition surveys completed in May and June. The team noted though that if the food pipeline breaks, a rapid deterioration of the nutritional situation could ensue since food aid recipients have not actively conserved their food, and NGOs lack the capacity to respond effectively.

**Mozambique.** WFP is currently phasing-in vulnerable group feeding activities. Its implementing partners, along with local authorities and WFP food aid monitors, are selecting the most at-risk areas. WFP is also exploring the possibility of Food for Work activities in nine communities in Gaza Province.

FEWS NET's latest report on Mozambique indicated that above normal rains in the central and southern parts of the country at the end of October and beginning of November, marked the onset of the rainy season. FEWS NET reported it expects food insecurity in urban areas to increase due to a number of factors: rapid urbanization, lack of access to land and rural transfers, high staple prices, relative price changes and availability of key commodities consumed by the poor, regional dynamics, HIV/AIDS, unemployment, and declining remittances.

**Lesotho.** Field reports suggest that the agricultural situation in many districts of Lesotho is critical. The lack of rain in October and early November, combined with

frost, has negatively affected crop production, especially for corn, pumpkins, and beans. However, rains late in November did help with some recovery of summer crops in the lowlands. Projections indicate that most of the country will remain dry through February, resulting in lower harvest yields than in 2002. Seed distribution has begun at some of WFP's distribution points, but large areas of the country have not planted since farmers are facing shortages of seed and farm inputs. Many of the seeds that were set aside for the planting season have already been eaten.

WFP distributed 847 MT of food to approximately 69,400 Lesothoans during the week of November 29. Due to the projections for next year's harvest, WFP is expected to extend the current EMOP for Lesotho to July 2004 and will increase the number of beneficiaries from 455,000 to 700,000. WFP is also considering prepositioning food at two or three locations to improve food delivery to remote and inaccessible areas.

**Swaziland.** WFP distributed more than 300 MT to seven of its implementing partners during the week of November 29. It also held a workshop with all of its partner field coordinators to discuss vulnerability and beneficiary targeting for the month of December. This year's corn harvest is not looking promising since dry conditions persist.

UNICEF's pilot school feeding program in five primary schools in Shiselweni and eastern Lubombo regions has indicated a reversal in school dropout rates. WFP is providing the food for the program, through which UNICEF hopes to expand to feed 36,000 children in rural areas of Swaziland.

## **USG HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE**

Since the beginning of 2002, the USG has provided or pledged more than \$276 million in emergency humanitarian assistance in response to the food security crisis.

In FY 2002, USAID/OFDA provided more than \$10 million in non-food programs that are currently underway in Zimbabwe, Malawi, Zambia, and Lesotho. As part of this assistance, USAID/OFDA provided \$1 million to WFP to assist with its regional management and logistics coordination. USAID/OFDA continues to address needs in water and sanitation, coordination, nutrition, and health, particularly preparing for outbreaks of endemic and opportunistic diseases.

In addition to emergency humanitarian efforts for the food security crisis in Southern Africa, USAID programs are designed to reduce the risk of future crises through the Agricultural Initiative to Cut Hunger in Africa. The objective of the Initiative is to promote a rapid and sustainable increase in agricultural growth and rural

incomes in sub-Saharan Africa by advancing scientific and technological applications that will raise agricultural productivity, create agriculture-based enterprises, and improve the agricultural trade and market systems.

In response to the ongoing HIV/AIDS pandemic in the Southern Africa region, USAID's Africa Bureau (USAID/AFR) is supporting HIV/AIDS prevention, control, care, and support initiatives, as well as programs for HIV/AIDS orphans and vulnerable children throughout the region. USAID/AFR also supports a regional HIV/AIDS program in Southern Africa that focuses on regional cross-border activities.

USAID is also sponsoring a SADC Regional Workshop on biotech and food insecurity in Gaborone, Botswana, in February 2003. Participants will include technical experts from around the world and policymakers from the affected countries. The meeting will address the technical and policy issues related to biotech food aid.

**FY 2002 U.S. GOVERNMENT HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE  
SOUTHERN AFRICA FOOD SECURITY CRISIS**

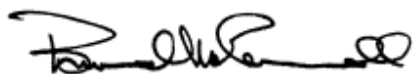
<i>Country*</i>	<i>USG Food Assistance (From USAID/FFP and USDA)</i>
Lesotho	27,760 MT
Malawi	141,895 MT
Mozambique	19,790 MT
Swaziland	15,542 MT
Zambia	74,500 MT
Zimbabwe	217,006 MT
Region (Country allocation to be finalized)	3,000 MT
<b>Total</b>	<b>499,493 MT</b>

<i>Country*</i>	<i>USG Non-Food Assistance (From USAID/OFDA)</i>
Lesotho	\$20,000
Malawi	\$4,640,990
Zambia	\$1,538,560
Zimbabwe	\$2,925,661
Regional Support	\$1,000,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$10,125,211</b>

<b><i>SUMMARY OF FY 2002 USG HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE</i></b>	
USAID/Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA)	\$10,125,211
USAID/Office of Food For Peace (FFP)**	\$252,609,551
<b>USAID Total</b>	<b>\$262,734,762</b>
<b>U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Total</b>	<b>\$13,294,788</b>
<b>TOTAL USG HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE</b>	<b>\$276,029,550</b>

\* To see a breakdown in funding for each country, refer to the previous USAID/DCHA/OFDA Situation Report #3, FY 2003, dated November 1, 2002.

\*\* Note: USAID/FFP value is an estimate. Commodities may have been reallocated to meet changing needs.



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\*USAID/OFDA bulletins can be obtained from the USAID web site at [http://www.usaid.gov/hum\\_response/ofda](http://www.usaid.gov/hum_response/ofda).

